ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In a shift mechanism for an outboard motor mounted on a stern of a boat and having an internal combustion engine at its upper portion and a propeller at its lower portion that is powered by the engine to propel the boat, having an electric motor installed in the outboard motor, a shift rod rotatably connected to the electric motor, a shifter clutch connected to the shift rod, the shifter clutch being movable by the shift rod from a neutral position to engage with at least one of a forward gear and a reverse gear, and a controller controlling the electric motor to rotate the shift rod such that the shifter clutch engages with the forward gear or the reverse gear, corresponding to an inputted shift instruction made by the operator, there is provided a shock mitigator mitigating shock generated during the shift. The shock mitigator comprises projections formed on the clutch and the forward/reverse gear. Alternatively, the electric motor and its reduction-gear mechanism are accommodated in a case to be located above the shift rod. Further, there is provided an emergency gear that allows the shift rod to be rotated manually to effect shift.